

VZCZCXYZ0004  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAK #2752 3131610  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 091610Z NOV 07  
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4337  
INFO RUEHYE/AMEMBASSY YEREVAN 1313

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002752

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [AM](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKISH FM BABACAN ON RELATIONS WITH YEREVAN

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROSS WILSON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (c) Ambassador used a meeting late November 8 with Turkish FM Babacan on other subjects to update him on House Resolution 106 (the "Armenian genocide resolution"). Many with whom he spoke during consultations in Washington following PM Erdogan's White House meeting November 5 believed it very unlikely the resolution will return to active consideration before the end of 2007. Several anti-resolution members of Congress had advised that they do not expect any further efforts to secure passage before the next Congress ) i.e., in 2009. One resolution sponsor who nevertheless opposed it in October had spoken about trying to move a text that referred only indirectly to "genocide," but it was not clear how much support this might have.

¶2. (c) While the resolution can be brought back at any time, Ambassador opined that this seems unlikely soon. That provides a window of opportunity for Turkey to take steps that may change the politics of a measure that most believe will eventually prove unstoppable. Repeating observations made previously to other Turkish officials, he urged action to normalize diplomatic ties, ease the border closure, and amend Turkish Penal Code Article 301 that criminalizes "insulting Turkishness" and which has been used against citizens here who contract the mainstream view against genocide. Such initiatives would change politics surrounding the genocide resolution and give Turkey new influence toward an Armenian-Azerbaijan settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh and on behalf of stability in the Caucasus generally.

¶3. (c) Babacan expressed great appreciation for the Administration's efforts to prevent House passage of the Armenia resolution. Turkish authorities knew how difficult this had been, including personally and politically for many members of Congress. They would be reaching out in coming days to thank those who supported Turkey and US-Turkish relations.

¶4. (c) Babacan said he had proposed that Armenia and Turkey work toward the normalization of relations and to establish an historians' commission to examine the "events of 1915" when he met with Armenian FM Oskanian in New York in October. Babacan said this remains Ankara's policy. He understood the window for an initiative to have impact in the US may not be open long. Turkey will come back to this once the furor here over the resolution dies down; if it hasn't happened sooner, the Armenian presidential election in March could be a catalyst for efforts with the next government. Babacan urged continued US encouragement of Armenia to respond in kind.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON